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Some New Cleveland Reminiscences

Grover Cleveland's keen insight into current events and political movements has recently been illustrated by some interesting personal recollections. A recent writer, Jesse Lynch Williams, who enjoyed a long intimate acquaintance with the ex-President, has gathered some reminiscences from his records for publication. He comments upon Mr. Cleveland's humor, sympathy, and simple friendliness, and on his aversion to needless conversation. Mr. Williams found him, however, a most inspiring listener, "with a flattering manner of regarding you while talking, as if your views upon the topic of conversation were quite as worthy of attention as his own."

As an illustration of this characteristic trait, Mr. Williams sketches the following dramatic incident in *The American Magazine*:

On the afternoon that President McKinley was shot at Buffalo, Mr. Cleveland was fishing with a friend in a small lake in the Berkshires. At about sunset a man was seen rowing rapidly out toward the ex-President's boat. "Mr. Cleveland, Mr. Cleveland," he shouted as he drew within call, "President McKinley has been assassinated!" The ex-President did not start. He simply looked at the stranger, too much amazed by this bolt out of the blue to say anything.

The man came nearer. "I tell you," he repeated, panting from his rapid rowing, "President McKinley has been shot—killed!"

Mr. Cleveland scrutinized the stranger a moment in grave silence, betraying nothing of what he thought or felt. Then making a sign to show that he had heard and appreciated what the man wished to say, his gaze dropt to his line again, though of course he was not thinking of fishing now.

The bearer of bad tidings looked at the apparently stolid figure of the silent fisherman. "You don't seem to be much excited about it," he muttered, and, putting about, rowed slowly to shore.

Mr. Cleveland waited a little while, still in profound silence, then thoughtfully reeling in his line he merely said to his friend, "Well, I guess we may as well go." On the way to shore he disjoined his rod in his careful, deliberate manner, put it in the case, saying nothing.

At the landing he was met by the nearest local correspondent for a certain New-York newspaper, also quite excited and not a little embarrassed by his unwelcome assignment. "I'm sorry to trouble you, sir," he said, "but my paper wants me to get two hundred words from you on the assassination of the President."

Mr. Cleveland at first shook his head. "Say this," he finally answered, "that in common with all decent, patriotic American citizens I am so horrified by this report that I am unable to say anything." Then turning hastily away he drove off with his friend, and for some time said nothing even to him as the carriage jolted over the hilly roads and the sunset faded. Then suddenly, as if they had been talking all the time, he said aloud, "Well, it may not be true." Presently he added, "It may be true that he has been shot, it may not be true that he has been killed." After that there was still a longer silence until finally just before the end of the drive—it was now quite dark—he began to talk (and note the extraordinary presence of the conclusion he reached as a result of his slow, silent brooding upon the momentous tidings): First of all, he said, if the report were true, the thing could hardly have been done by a disappointed office-seeker as in the case of "poor Garfield," for the circumstances at the time were not such as to make that very probable. Nor, he explained, was it very likely that labor troubles could have been the immediate cause; there were no strikes of importance on at the time. Other possible agencies were passed in review and cast aside as possible but hardly probable. "So," he added quietly, but with the divination of a seer of old, "if McKinley has been shot there is no other explanation than that it has been by the hand of some foreign anarchist." And within a few hours he was reliably informed that this precisely was the case!

Mr. Cleveland's early recognition of Mr. Roosevelt's political ability also emphasizes another phase of his alert analytical mind. Mr. George F. Parker, his official biographer, gives the following incident in *McClure's Magazine* for April. Mr. Cleveland said to Mr. Parker immediately after the accession of Mr. Roosevelt to the presidency: "Roosevelt is the most perfectly equipped and the most effective politician thus far seen in the presidency. Jackson, Jefferson and Van Buren were not, for a moment, comparable with him in this respect. When I was Governor he was still a very young man and only a member of the Assembly; but it was clear to me, even thus early, that he was looking to a public career: that he was studying political conditions with a care that I had never known any man to show; and that he was firmly convinced that he would some day reach prominence. I must, however, confess that I never supposed that the presidency would come within the scope of his aspirations so early in life."

The writer adds: In October, 1907, in the course of conversation, I told this anecdote to Mr. Richard Olney, in Boston, and he exclaimed: "Oh, I can beat that! I know of an occasion when Mr. Cleveland expressed his opinion long before his talk with you."

When I asked for particulars, Olney said: "In 1893, when the question of choosing a president of the Civil Service Commission was presented to the Cabinet—every member of which was in favor of the promotion of Mr. Roosevelt, then a member of that body—President Cleveland was strongly opposed to this action, and said: 'I want to tell you gentlemen now that you are making a mistake. I have

known this young man Roosevelt since 1883, and I tell you that, without exception, he is the most ambitious man and the most consummate politician I have ever seen. However, as you all favor his nomination I will not oppose it. I only want you to bear my words in mind. The time will come when you will see that I am right.'"

BALLADE OF THE PRUDENT SPORT.

I'm not pugnacious, not a bit.
Before I'd fight I'd always run.
That I'm a liar I'll admit.
In fact, that's what I've often done.
I never could see any fun
In being wiped from off the map
By some big brute who weighs a ton.
But, oh, I love to see a scrap!

It is a pity that the pit—
That is an inadvertent pun—
Is frowned upon as most unfit
To patronize—a thing to shun.
But fighting cocks do take the bun
For force and fury, fire and snap.
My morals are most finely spun.
But, oh, I love to see a scrap!

I like to see a fellow hit
A blow with force enough to stun
And come up smiling, full of grit,
As if the thing had just begun.
Of all things underneath the sun
That is the one that warms a chap.
I'm not a Vandal, nor a Hun,
But, oh, I love to see a scrap!

L'ENVOI.

To safely sit and watch the one
The other's crimson claret tap!
In mildness I will yield to none,
But, oh, I love to see a scrap!

They were talking of the strange sights to be seen in a great city, and one man paid his tribute to New York: "I don't believe one of you could think of any combination of circumstances that hasn't at some time occurred on the streets there," he said. "I reckon I know of one that's never occurred there," said Hiram Fowle. "What's that?" asked the other, curiously. "I guess," said Hiram, slowly, "that you've never seen, nor ever will see, a brass band going in one direction and the heft of the folks going the other."

OF THE MULTITUDES

who have used it, or are now using it, we have never heard of any one who has been disappointed in it. No claims are made for it except those which are amply justified by experience. In commending it to the afflicted we simply point to its record. It has done great things, and it is certain to continue the excellent work. There is—we may honestly affirm—no medicine which can be used with greater and more reasonable faith and confidence. It nourishes and keeps up the strength during those periods when the appetite fails and food cannot be digested. To guard against imitations this "trade mark" is put on every bottle of



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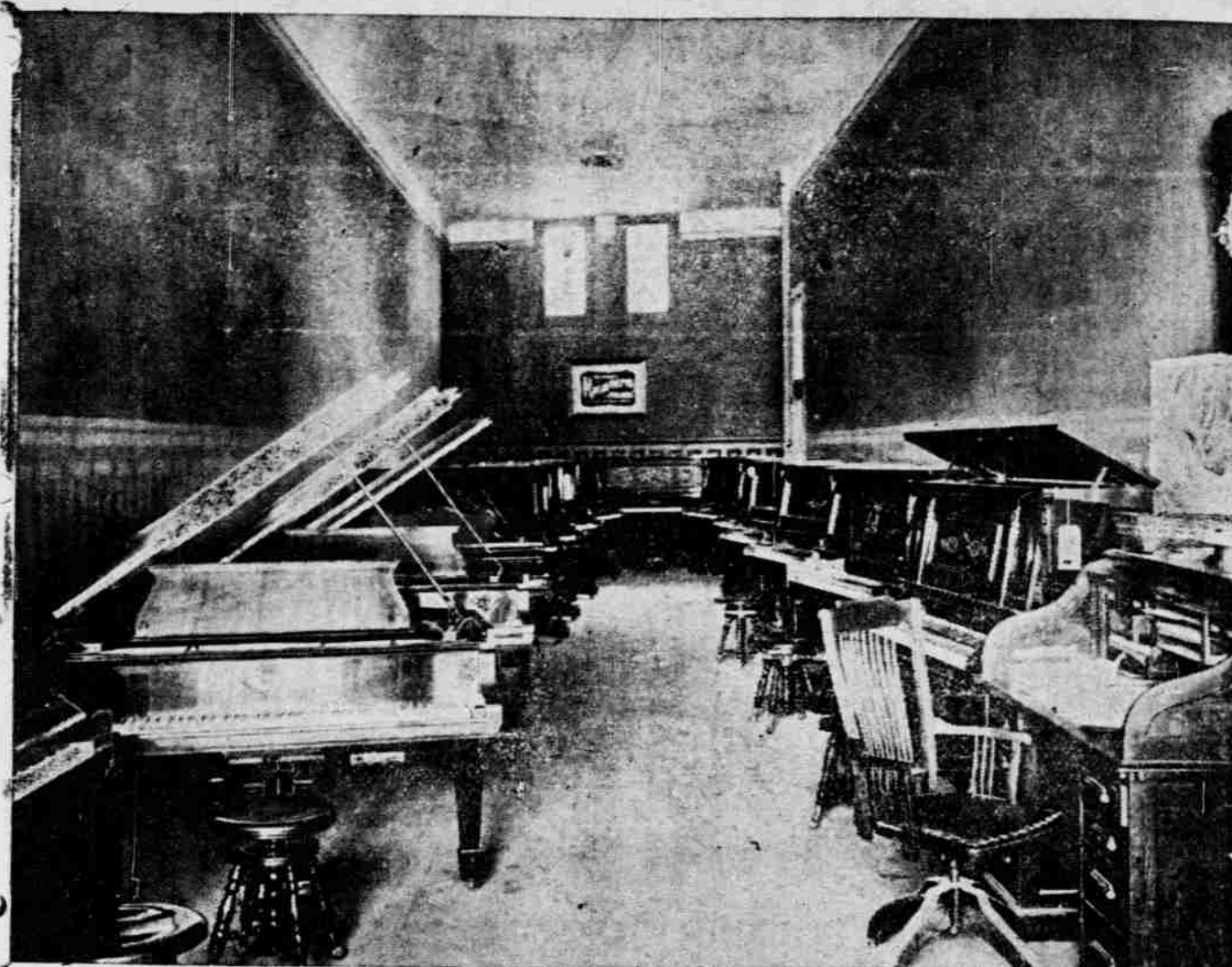
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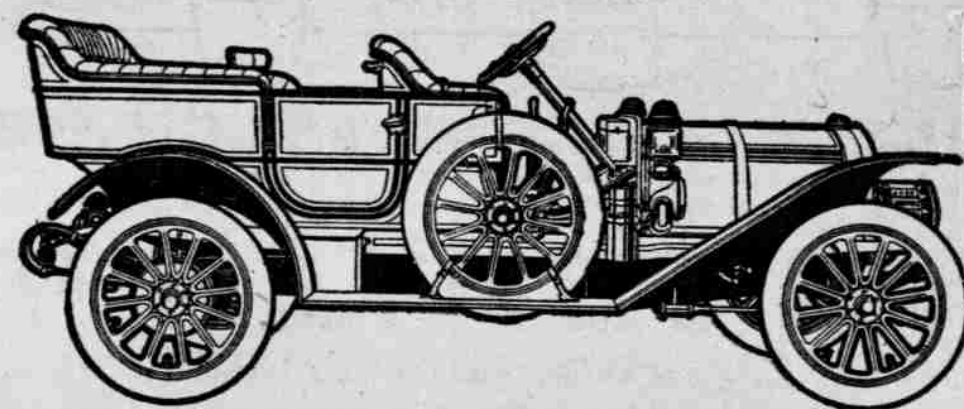
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